



Economic and Social Council

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Creating an environment at the national and international levels conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its impact on sustainable development

Statement submitted by National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2006/100



Statement

The National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO), a non-governmental organization based in the United States of America, welcomes the opportunity to submit a brief statement to the United Nation's Economic and Social Council on the intersection between housing and employment.

The National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) is a professional membership organization comprised of 21,227 housing and community development agencies and officials throughout the United States who administer a variety of affordable housing and community development programs at the local level. NAHRO's mission is to create affordable housing and safe, viable communities that enhance the quality of life for all Americans, especially those of low- and moderate-income by:

- Ensuring that housing and community development professionals have the leadership skills, education, information and tools to serve communities in a rapidly changing environment;
- Advocating for appropriate laws and policies which are sensitive to the needs of the people served, are financially and programmatically viable for our industry, are flexible, promote deregulation and local decision making; and
- Fostering the highest standards of ethical behavior, service and accountability.

NAHRO enhances the professional development and effectiveness of its members through its comprehensive professional development curriculum conferences and publications. Through these efforts we are working to equip NAHRO and our membership with the skills, knowledge, and abilities necessary to survive and prosper in a changing environment, and make our Association more efficient and effective.

Throughout its history, NAHRO's membership has experienced first-hand the positive impact decent, safe affordable shelter can have on low-income families' economic success. Conversely, NAHRO members also see first-hand the devastating impact poor shelter can have on limiting economic opportunities for families. Just as water is the number one common thread that provides the basis for all people in this world to survive, decent, safe and affordable shelter is the common thread needed by everyone to achieve any measure of economic success. Adequate shelter may mean different things to different people based on their income; however, it is the basic element of life, the water of our economic growth.

Far too many families world-wide spend more than 50 percent of their income on shelter. This creates economic hardships on low-income families and makes it difficult to achieve any reasonable measure of economic success. The stress and uncertainty created by expensive shelter leads to inadequate resources for basic necessities of life such as food, clothing and adequate health care. This creates an environment that limits opportunities for children to grow in a healthy, nurturing environment.

NAHRO strongly suggests that the Council take time from its current deliberations to devote a good portion of its discussions on the intersection between housing and economic success. The Council should strongly recommend that any employment policy must include a strong housing component that ensures that decent, safe affordable shelter is available to low-income families.